

are used to fund conflict in Africa—wars that have killed more than 2 million people, driven 6.5 million from their homes, and subjected many of the region's 70 million people to horrific atrocities.

The Clean Diamonds Act lends the support of the United States—whose citizens buy 65 percent of the world's diamonds—to multilateral efforts to sever the link between diamonds and war. It implements the diamond industry's July 2000 promise to help block the trade in these diamonds, and gives it a year longer than it said it needed.

Mr. Speaker, I will never forget the two-year-old girl who lost an arm to rebels, or what her fellow war victims told Congressman WOLF and I when we visited Sierra Leone's amputee camp in 1999. When we asked what had happened to each of them, they told nightmarish tales of rebels who lopped off their hand to punish them for voting, or their legs or ears or arms so they would always remember how much the rebels hated the country's elected government. But when we asked why their countrymen were suffering, they gave us a one-word answer: "diamonds."

There is no question that diamonds do a lot of good for a few southern African nations that, because of a quirk of geology, have the ability to secure their mines against takeover by thieves masquerading as rebels. Diamonds also are making the industry wealthy beyond imagination: for example, DeBeers, the monopoly which buys the overwhelming majority of uncut diamonds, just reported a 73 percent increase in profits in 2000.

But for Sierra Leone, Angola, the Congo, Guinea, and Liberia, diamonds are a curse. They are a magnet for bandits, who seize diamond mines and trade their production for weapons, narcotics they use to numb their fighters to the tasks they demand, and the other materiel these big armies need. Diamonds in those countries are close to the surface and spread over large regions, so it is much harder to patrol mining done there. Because of that, and because the legitimate industry is so willing to help rebels launder their stolen gems, neither these countries nor the United Nations has been able to fend off these rebel forces.

I am convinced that, until this link between diamonds and war is severed, we will continue to see these atrocities—forced amputations, brutal murders of innocent civilians, widespread rapes and other sex crimes, and a generation of youngsters whose only education is as child soldiers. We will see no end to hunger, disease, and the other problems of war. For example, a recent International Rescue Committee survey of people who live in a relatively peaceful, but rebel-controlled, district of Sierra Leone found one in three dies before his or her first birthday—more than twice the country's overall infant mortality rate. And we will continue to watch billions of dollars in aid pour into amputee camps and other humanitarian projects, while tens of billions in conflict diamonds pour out of these same countries.

The Clean Diamonds Act grew out of the diamond industry's own July 2000 promise that it would move swiftly to end the trade in conflict diamonds and establish a system of controls by December 2000. That hasn't happened; without some pressure from US consumers, I doubt any effective solution will be implemented.

In these embattled countries, rebels are committing terrible atrocities every day—and

they are doing it with the complicity of a legitimate industry that markets conflict diamonds as tokens of love and commitment. Our bill gives the industry a year more than it said it needed to take the steps it should have begun years ago. It supports the efforts of South Africa and more than 20 other nations, working through the Kimberley Process, to devise an effective response to this problem.

The nations and legitimate businesses that supply the US market are well able to fulfill the reasonable obligations this bill outlines. This bill asks nothing more of our trading partners than that they enforce effective laws against the smuggling of conflict diamonds. Eight months ago, to great fanfare, the diamond industry agreed it would do just that. Three months ago, the U.N. General Assembly unanimously voted on the need for immediate attention to this problem—before it sours consumer interest in diamonds and damages countries that rely on diamond production. I hope the Clean Diamonds Act will add momentum to these promises of action.

I am particularly pleased with some key features of the Clean Diamonds Act:

First, it will bring relief to the victims of these wars for the control of diamonds because it provides that any contraband diamond caught entering the U.S. market shall be seized and sold to pay for prosthetic limbs and other relief to war victims, and for micro-credit projects.

Second, it offers a real deterrent, by imposing civil and criminal penalties like those that have proven effective in slowing the smuggling of other contraband. Among its provisions, it allows U.S. authorities to block the assets of significant violators of these laws.

Third, it offers jewelers and their customers a 'seal of approval' that gives them independent verification that the money they spend on a symbol of love and commitment does not go into the pockets of those forcibly amputating the limbs of innocent civilians, or press-ganging children into military service and sexual slavery, or committing other atrocities. Americans ought to be able to ask for this kind of reassurance with confidence they'll get honest answers; this bill gives them that.

Fourth, it makes diamond projects in countries that refuse to implement some system of controls ineligible for taxpayer-funded Eximbank and OPIC loan guarantees.

Finally, it requires systems designed to guard against conflict diamonds to be transparent and independently monitored. And it insists on annual reports to Congress and the American public so that the situation never again reaches the point it is at today, where brutal thugs earn nearly \$20 million each day from this blood trade—most of it from American consumers.

"I am heartened that such respected organizations as Amnesty International, World Vision, Physicians for Human Rights, Oxfam America, World Relief, and the Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism are supporting this bill, and I am encouraged by the assistance of these champions of human rights, Congressman WOLF and Congresswoman MCKINNEY. All of these individuals and organizations are veterans of good fights that have been waged on behalf of those who are hurting, and I urge our colleagues to join us in resolving this pressing problem."

A summary of the bill is attached.

CLEAN DIAMONDS ACT—SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1: The bill shall be called the Clean Diamonds Act.

Section 2: The bill makes findings about the extent of suffering underwritten by the trade in conflict diamonds, including 6.5 million people driven from their homes and 2.4 million killed, and on the need for an effective solution to this problem.

Section 3: Diamonds may not be imported into the United States unless the exporting country is implementing a system of controls on the export and import of rough diamonds that comports with the UN General Assembly's Resolution of 12/00, or with a future international agreement that implements such controls.

This system's implementation shall be monitored by U.S. agencies. A presidential advisory commission (comprised of representatives of human rights organizations, the diamond industry, and others) will develop a label certifying that a diamond is clean, having reached the US market through countries implementing this system of controls, and will advise the President on monitoring issues.

Section 4: Violators shall be subject to civil and criminal penalties, including confiscation of contraband. Significant violators' US assets may be blocked. Proceeds from penalties and the sale of diamonds seized as contraband shall be transferred to U.S. AID's War Victims Fund and used to help civilians affected by wars, through humanitarian relief and micro-credit development projects.

Section 5: Diamond-sector projects in countries that fail to adopt a system of controls shall not be eligible for loan guarantees or other assistance of the Eximbank or OPIC.

Section 6: The President shall report annually to Congress on the system's effectiveness; on which countries are implementing it; on which countries are not implementing it and the effects of their actions on the illicit trade in diamonds; and on technological advances that permit determining a diamond's origin, marking a diamond, and tracking it.

Section 7: The GAO shall report on the law's effectiveness within three years of enactment.

Section 8: It is the sense of the Congress that (a) the President immediately negotiate, in concert with the Kimberley Process, an international agreement designed to eliminate the illicit trade in diamonds; and (b) the system implementing this agreement should be transparent and subject to independent verification and monitoring by a U.S. organization.

Section 9: Definitions.

Section 10: The law takes effect six months after enactment. Under limited conditions, the President may delay applicability of the law to a specific country for six months, provided he report to Congress on that country's progress toward establishing a system of controls and concluding an International agreement.

FEBRUARY 14, 2001.

OPEN LETTER TO THE JEWELERS OF AMERICA AND WORLD DIAMOND CONGRESS: We, the undersigned religious, humanitarian, development, human rights, medical, missionary, and relief organizations write to express our outrage over the continued trade in diamonds from war zones in Africa, including Sierra Leone, Angola, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The profits to insurgent forces from their sale of diamonds have